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Newsletter

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

GRADUATE SCHOOL ★ USDA

July 31 1956

To the Faculty Committee Members and others associated with the Graduate School

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Mrs Constance G. Coblenz to our staff on September 1. She becomes Registrar when Mrs Louise Sullivan Malone leaves some weeks after the fall semester starts.

Mrs Coblenz comes to the Graduate School from Brookings Institution where since 1946, she has been administrative officer in charge of a monthly publication Current Developments in United States Foreign Policy and has served as Chief of the Documentation Unit of the International Studies Group.

With William A. Reitzel and Morton A. Kaplan she has written a new book, "United States Foreign Policy, 1945-1955" published by Brookings this month.

Before coming to Washington in 1945 Mrs Coblenz served as secretary of the Department of Geology and Geography at Harvard University. Prior to that she was an administrative assistant and news writer in the public information office of Columbia University and she has also served as a librarian in the Boston Public Library. She is a graduate of the Horace Mann School for Girls in New York and holds the A.B. and A.M. degrees from Radcliffe.

Mrs Malone has served with distinction as registrar since 1951. She came to us from the political science faculty of Miami University, Oxford Ohio. An honor graduate of Radcliffe, she was among the interns in government selected by the National Institute of Public Affairs and served her internship in USDA's Office of Budget and Finance under the late William A. Jump. Our warmest good wishes will go with her in her new career of homemaking and raising a family when she leaves after registration and readjusting of classes for the fall semester.

A scholarship plan to encourage promising young government workers to continue their training has been adopted by the General Administration Board. The plan, which goes into operation this fall, will provide 35 one-course scholarships for employees in metropolitan Washington.

Candidates will be selected by their agencies on the basis chiefly of professional need, though financial need will be given some weight. In most instances, scholarships will be limited to the candidate's first course. Preference will be given to younger persons, 18 to 30 years. It is expected that most of the candidates will have finished high school but will not have completed requirements for a bachelor's degree. A candidate with post graduate education will be considered if additional education is needed for a desirable change to a different field of work.

The scholarships will be allotted to government agencies on the basis of employees enrolled in the Graduate School in May 1956. Training officers in all agencies represented in the student body have been given forms for initiating

applications. These must be filed by the candidate's supervisor. The deadline in the Graduate School is August 15, 1956.

Final selection of candidates to receive scholarships will be made by the Graduate School Scholarship Committee.

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USDA Assistant Secretary Earl Butz is serving as chairman of a committee to plan a lecture series on the general theme of Rural Influences on American Culture. Members of the committee are Charles Cunningham, Cannon Hearne, C.O. Henderson, Eunice Heywood, Sherman Johnson, Foster Mohrhardt, Russell Thackrey, Lyle Webster, and O. V. Wells.

* * *

The lecture series on conservation now being developed will cover specific questions, it has been agreed by the committee planning this series. Tentative topics are: (1) water resources with consideration of developments in water law and policy, growing needs for irrigation, industrial and domestic use, ground-water, and problems of distribution; (2) the Great Plains as a regional resource problem area; (3) the changing picture of forestry in the South; (4) surpluses, research, and conservation; and (5) the role of the individual and the role of the public in resource conservation.

Richard E. McCardle is chairman of the committee. Members are Earl M. Hughes, Paul V. Kepner, Foster Mohrhardt, Byron T. Shaw, O. V. Wells, and Donald A. Williams.

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Of the 122 certificates of accomplishment granted by the Graduate School in the years since this practice was established, 80 have gone to students in administrative procedure, 21 to students in accounting, 17 in public administration and two each to students in mathematics and in surveying and mapping.

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Among the pleasures of starting anew each year is the opportunity to see old friends and make new ones at the annual faculty dinner. The committee we named to arrange this year's affair has held one meeting and decided on the guidelines:

- (1) A speaker whose broad experience in science, education, or public administration has given him insights we would like to share.
- (2) A place that serves good food at a reasonable price and is convenient for parking and for those who come by public transportation.
- (3) A date shortly before the beginning of the fall semester. The tentative choice was the 12th or 13th of September.

Members of the committee are Theodora Carlson, L. E. LeClerc, Olga Arnold Emerson Brooks, William Harris, Hans Hoiberg, Lance Hooks, Jerome Permutter, William Vogely, Vera Jensen and Ruth Carlock. Marguerite Gilstrap is the chairman.

In POWER OF WORDS (Harcourt Brace and Co.) Stuart Chase tells of "My friend James Saunders, a retired naval officer much interested in semantics (who) undertook to coach some 'backward' boys in the local Maryland high school. They

had all failed in one or more subjects. The project particularly appealed to him because he had taught himself how to study at Annapolis, boosting his rank from 193 to 14 in his class.

"His basic assumption was that the "backward" boys were as smart as the average, but their interest had not been aroused. They suffered from scholastic apathy and classroom misunderstandings. His chief task was to get their feelings and interests involved in the school work.

"He showed the boys that invaluable rule of priority: (a) things to learn only well enough to pass examinations, (b) things to learn permanently. He helped them fashion a series of memory ticklers; encouraged them to establish closer relations with their classroom teachers, asking a lot more questions. He taught them how to get the meaning of something which at first seemed incomprehensible by finding an association with something familiar, thus tying in to their own experience.

"His techniques were exploratory, but he proved that these backward boys were not backward at all when approached more imaginatively, and he demonstrated the value of General Semantics in that approach. Every boy in the group made up his deficiency in less than six months and those who went on to college did better than the average of their classmates."

Captain Saunders has been a member of the Graduate School faculty since 1948.

"Teaching is a grand profession, isn't it?"

This comment from Virginia B. Roser came in a note with the grades for her class in Fundamentals of Speech for the spring semester.

Along with the grades, Miss Roser sent a letter from one of her students telling her how much it had meant to him in solving what he called a serious speech problem.

Miss Roser adds, "I think the whole class shared his joy in the remarkable freedom he acquired ... with no specific work applied to his speech."

AMONG OURSELVES

Industrial plants and companies are making progress in preparing for Civil Defense under the guidance of a former valued member of the Graduate School faculty -- Virgil Couch, now director of the industry office of FCDA in Battle Creek, Michigan.

Our congratulations and good wishes to Carl Barnes, new president of the Society of Personnel Administration.

Sincerely,



T. Roy Reid
Director

